

MILITARY SERVICE

*Exchange of notes at Washington January 27, 1944; related note of
February 12, 1944*

Entered into force January 27, 1944

*Terminated March 31, 1947*¹

58 Stat. 1296; Executive Agreement Series 407

The Secretary of State to the Colombian Ambassador

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WASHINGTON

January 27, 1944

EXCELLENCY:

I have the honor to refer to conversations which have taken place between officers of the Colombian Embassy and of the Department of State with respect to the application of the United States Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended,² to Colombian nationals residing in the United States.

As you are aware, the Act provides that with certain exceptions every male citizen of the United States and every other male person between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five residing in the United States shall register. The Act further provides that, with certain exceptions, registrants within specified age limits are liable for active military service in the United States armed forces.

This Government recognizes that from the standpoint of morale of the individuals concerned and the over-all military effort of the countries at war with the Axis Powers, it is desirable to permit certain nationals of cobelligerent countries who have registered or who may register under the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, to enlist in the armed forces of their own country, should they desire to do so. It will be recalled that during the World War this Government signed conventions with certain associated powers on this subject. The United States Government believes, however, that under existing circumstances the same ends may now be accomplished through administrative action, thus obviating the delays incident to the signing and ratification of conventions.

¹ Upon termination of functions of U.S. Selective Service System (60 Stat. 341).

² 54 Stat. 885; 50 U.S.C. app.

This Government has, therefore, initiated a procedure permitting aliens who have registered under the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, who are nationals of certain cobelligerent countries and who have not declared their intention of becoming American citizens to elect to serve in the forces of their respective countries, in lieu of service in the armed forces of the United States, at any time prior to their induction into the armed forces of this country. This Government is also affording to such nationals, who may already be serving in the armed forces of the United States, an opportunity of electing to transfer to the armed forces of their own country. The details of the procedure are arranged directly between the War Department and the Selective Service System on the part of the United States Government and the appropriate authorities of the cobelligerent government concerned. It should be understood, however, that in all cases a person exercising an option under the procedure must actually be accepted by the military authorities of the country of his allegiance before his departure from the United States.

Before the above-mentioned procedure is made effective with respect to a cobelligerent country, this Department wishes to receive from the diplomatic representative in Washington of that country a note stating that his government desires to avail itself of the procedure and in so doing agrees that:

(a) No threat or compulsion of any nature will be exercised by his government to induce any person in the United States to enlist in the forces of his or any foreign government;

(b) Reciprocal treatment will be granted to American citizens by his government; that is, prior to induction in the armed forces of his government they will be granted the opportunity of electing to serve in the armed forces of the United States in substantially the same manner as outlined above. Furthermore, his government shall agree to inform all American citizens serving in its armed forces or former American citizens who may have lost their citizenship as a result of having taken an oath of allegiance on enlistment in such armed forces and who are now serving in those forces that they may transfer to the armed forces of the United States provided they desire to do so and provided they are acceptable to the armed forces of the United States. The arrangements for effecting such transfers are to be worked out by the appropriate representatives of the armed forces of the respective governments;

(c) No enlistments will be accepted in the United States by his government of American citizens subject to registration or of aliens of any nationality who have declared their intention of becoming American citizens and are subject to registration.

The Government is prepared to make the proposed regime effective immediately with respect to Colombia upon the receipt from you of a note stating

that your Government desires to participate in it and agrees to the stipulations set forth in lettered paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) above.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

For the Secretary of State:

G. HOWLAND SHAW

His Excellency

Señor Dr. DON GABRIEL TURBAY,
Ambassador of Colombia.

The Colombian Ambassador to the Secretary of State

[TRANSLATION]

EMBASSY OF COLOMBIA

WASHINGTON

January 27, 1944

No. 277

MR. SECRETARY:

I have the honor to inform Your Excellency that I have received instructions from my Government to accept the arrangement of an administrative character proposed by Your Excellency in note 27 of the current month, with regard to the application to Colombian citizens of the United States Selective Training and Service Act of 1940.

The Colombian Government accepts, on terms of reciprocity, the option proposed in favor of Colombian citizens registered under the aforementioned act or who at present may be serving under the United States flag, of requesting their incorporation into or transfer to the Army of Colombia, as well as the guarantees stipulated in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of the note referred to.

The Government of Colombia is prepared to put the proposed arrangement into force immediately and to study the details of its application with the appropriate authorities of the Government of the United States.

On this occasion I repeat to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration.

GABRIEL TURBAY

His Excellency

CORDELL HULL,
Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

The Secretary of State to the Colombian Ambassador

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON
February 12, 1944

EXCELLENCY:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note no. 277 of January 27, 1944, in which you state that your Government has indicated its readiness to enter into the agreement, as proposed in the Department's note of January 27, 1944, relating to military service of nationals of one country in the Armed Forces of the other country. You state that your Government agrees to the undertakings listed in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of the Department's note under reference.

I take pleasure in informing you that this Government considers this agreement to have become effective on January 27, 1944. The appropriate authorities of the Government have been informed accordingly. It is suggested that details incident to carrying out the agreement be discussed directly by officers of the Embassy with the appropriate officers in the Selective Service System and the War Department. Lieutenant Colonel S. G. Parker of the Selective Service System will be available to discuss questions relating to the exercise of the option prior to induction. The Inter-Allied Personnel Board of the War Department, which is headed by Major General Guy V. Henry, is the agency with which questions relating to the discharge of nondeclarant nationals of Colombia, who may have been serving in the Army of the United States on the effective date of the agreement, and who desire to transfer to the Colombian forces, may be discussed.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

For the Secretary of State:
G. HOWLAND SHAW

His Excellency
Señor Dr. DON GABRIEL TURBAY,
Ambassador of Colombia.